

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 FEAE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07
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UNCLAS OTTAWA 02544

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, ENRG, CA
SUBJECT: ALLEGED ARCTIC GAS OFFER ON NATIVE CLAIMS

1. CTV NATIONAL NEWS AIRED FOLLOWING ITEM EVENING APRIL 7,
COMBINING INTRODUCTORY COMMENT BY MODERATOR ROBERTSON WITH
VIDEOTAPES OF WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT CHAMP, SENATOR TED
STEVENS AND CONGRESSMAN RONCALIO, AS FOLLOWS:

2. ROBERTSON: U.S. FEDERAL POWER COMMISSION MAY INVESTIGATE
U.S. ARCTIC GAS COMPANY'S OFFER TO PAY NATIVE LAND CLAIMS
ALONG MCKENZIE VALLEY PIPELINE ROUTE. DISCLOSURE CAME IN
LEAKING OF CONFIDENTIAL U.S. EMBASSY DOCUMENT. ARCTIC GAS
HAS DENIED THE ALLEGATIONS BUT SEVERAL SENATORS, INCLUDING
TED STEVENS OF ALASKA, HAVE DOUBTS AND THEY WANT AN
INVESTIGATION.

3. CHAMP: SENATOR SAYS GAS USERS IN U.S. ARE NOW ALERTED
THEY MAY PAY COST OF CANADIAN NATIVE LAND CLAIMS IN ADDITION
TO THOSE COSTS ALREADY DETAILED. STEVENS HAS WITH OTHER
CONGRESSMEN PETITIONED FPC FOR CONSIDERATION OF THESE NEW
POSSIBILITIES AND HE IS CONFIDENT AMERICAN GAS CONSUMERS
ARE CERTAIN TO PROTEST.

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4. STEVENS: I ASKED OUR AMBASSADOR FOR AN EXPLANATION OF THAT
REFERENCE. IT WAS A SURPRISE TO ME. I BELIEVE YOU ARE
RIGHT. WE WILL OPPOSE IMPOSING UPON OUR CONSUMERS THE COST OF
SETTLING THE CANADIAN LAND CLAIMS.

5. CHAMP: AT THESE HEARINGS MORE THAN ONE ECONOMIST HAS

WONDERED IF CANADA CAN AFFORD TO PAY THOSE CLAIMS ESIMATED AT
UPWARDS TO A HALF BILLION DOLLARS. THAT PIPELINE REVENUES
WILL BE SO USED DOESN'T SURPRISE ANYONE. AND WITH CYNICISM
MANY BELIEVE THE CABLE'S DESCRIPTION IS CORRECT.

6. RONCALIO: IT'S A PRACTICAL SUGGESTION BY PRACTICAL
BUSINESS PEOPLE ANXIOUS TO CONCLUDE BUSINESS DEALS AND I
SEE IT AS THAT. IF THERE IS A DEGREE OF INAPPROPRIATENESS OR
IMPROPRIETY DEPENDS UPON THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER.

7. CHAMP: DESPITE ATTEMPTS BY THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT AND THE
U.S. EMBASSY TO DOWNPLAY THIS ISSUE, SOME EXPLANATION IS
NOW EXPECTED IN WASHINGTON ABOUT PIPELINE REVENUES AND HOW THEY
MAY EFFECT LAND CLAIMS SETTLEMENTS. FOR THEIR PART
ENVIRONMENTALISTS ARE GOING TO MAKE ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN THEIR
INTERESTS WILL NOT BE SACRIFICED AND THE U.S. GAS CONSUMER
IS GOING TO DEMAND HE NOT END UP PAYING FOR WHAT IS PERCEIVED
TO BE A LONG STANDING CANADIAN DEBT.
ENDERS

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